(c) The loss incurred is being assessed. The fire has been extinguished on 10th March, 1995. The process of capping the well is in progress.

(d) The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has instituted a one-man Enquiry Committe to go into the findings of the Enquiry Committee set up by ONGC and to submit its report to the Government. Future decisions would be based on the outcome of this enquiry.

Technical inquiry into the incident of fire in ONGC's Well

518. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high-level technical inquiry has been undertaken into the January 8, blowout of the ONGC's well at Pasarlapudi in the Krishna-Godavari basin; and

(b) if so, the details and findings thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. ONGC Ltd. constituted an Enquiry Committee which submitted its report to ONGC Ltd. who are examining the same. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has also instituted a one-man Enquiry Committee set up by the ONGC.

Fire in ONGC's Well

519. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the press newsitem captioned "Action Plan to blow out ONGC fire" as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated the 20th January, 1995;

(b) if so, the cause of fire in the ONGCs well in Krishna-Godavari basin;

(c) whether Government propose to strengthen its fire fighting/controlling mechanism and to keep a control on such incidents of fire; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The cause of the fire is being enquired into. In the meantime, the crisis management group of ONGC, which is responsible for fire-fighting, is being strengthened in terms of sophisticated equipments.

Relief measures for persons affected by ONGC's well fire

520. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a deadline had been set for capping of the rouge well near Amalapuram off Andhra Pradesh coast by the ONGC authorities with the help of experts from US;

(b) what has been the loss in terms of money due to delay beyond the deadline in capping the well;

(c) what relief measures were taken for those affected by the well fire and rehabilitation measures proposed to restore sources of livelihood in the neighbouring villages; and

(d) whether the US experts have opined that the delay in capping the well has been due to lack of crisis management expertise on the part of

ONGC compounded by bureaucratic red tape?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) ONGC with the assistance of US experts had set a time frame to try and extinguish the fire by 18.02.1995.

(b) The loss caused is being assessed.

(c) People from the affected villages were immediately evacuated to relief camps and provided food and medical facilities.

(d) Yes, Sir. However, the opinion expresseed by Mr. Neal Adams is not correct.

US company to cap the burning well of ONGC

521. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC had recently requisitioned the services of US based company to cap the burning well near Amalapuram in A.P. where a blow out occurred recently;

(b) if so, the expenditure incurred by the ONGC for utilising the services of M/s. Neil Adams Fire Fighter Inc., Houston which is prepared to cap the burning well;

(c) what was the estimated quantity of gas lost in the burning well; and

(d) preventive steps proposed to be taken by ONGC to avoid such burning of gas in the wells in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) So far, an amount of Rs. 1,07,95,285/- has been paid to Messers Neal Adams Fire Fighters Inc., Houston.

(c) Approximately 8 to 10 lakhs cubic metres of gas per day.

(d) A number of fresh instructions have been issued by ONGC to prevent such incidents.

Damage due to ONGC's well fire

522. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fire in the ONGC's gas well at Pasarlapudi in Krishna-Godavari basin has caused damage to the environment, vegetation, crops and human health in the vicinity of the fire;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and whether any compensation has been or is likely to be paid to such people and whether any scheme has beeen chalked out to restore the damage to environment; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Officials of the Andhra Pradesh State Pollution Control Board and ONGC are continuously monitoring the environmental parameters. From the measures values of air samples it is observed that presence of unburnt hydrocarbons Hydrogen Salphide, or Sulphide or Sulphur dioxide is below detectable limit. Environmental experts from National Institute of Oceanography, Goa and University of Pune have been engaged to carry out a study on the environmental impact due to the blow out on the flora, fauna, water resources, marine organisms and ambient air quality.